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Ex-Negotiator on SALT Details

Split With Joint Chiefs

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Retired Lt. Gen. Edward J. Rowny, who recently resigned in protest as the Joint Chiefs of Staff representative in the SALT II negotiations, said yesterday he parted company with his military superiors in March when they dropped their previously strong objections to "concessions" by the Carter administration.

"We made rather large concessions" while the Soviets "made small ones" in the last months of negotiation, Rowny said at a primarily sympathetic hearing before the Senate Armed Services Committee.

Asked why the nation's top military leaders would back down from their earlier positions, the forceful former Army officer said, "I attribute it to the [Administration's] interest and zeal to have an arms control agreement—and the appeal to the military that risks can be taken and should be taken."

Rowny resigned from the Army in June after six years as the Joint Chiefs' representative just as the SALT treaty was being signed in Vienna.

Until March 1979, Rowny said, he and the joint chiefs wanted:

- Cuts to be made in the 308 Soviet heavy landbased ICBMs, the SS18s, or some other compensation to the United States since it was not allowed to have any heavy missiles.

- No limitations on cruise missiles whether long or short range.

- The Soviet Backfire bomber to be counted as a strategic system because it could reach the United States from Soviet bases.

Those positions were not reflected in the SALT II agreement that was announced in May and signed in June.

Nonetheless the joint chiefs have given their support to the treaty, terming it "modest but useful." In their testimony before the Senate, however, the chiefs repeatedly have expressed concern on just those provisions Rowny termed previously unacceptable.

As he had in testimony July 12 before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Rowny yesterday said SALT II should be sent back for renegotiation.

He insisted that although "the Soviets would show a lot of hurt, it would not be the end of the world. In time they'll come around . . . the strain sooner or later will have to show [on their economy]."

He said his one criticism of the position taken Tuesday by former secretary of state Henry A. Kissinger was that "he wants equality [in heavy missiles] to take place in SALT III. I want that now."

Several times, in answer to questions yesterday, Rowny gave illustrations of what he termed U.S. lack of patience in negotiating with the Soviets. "We say we'll stick to a position," he recalled for Sen. John Tower (R-

Tex), "but we don't. They sit us out."

Rowny said the United States "should have persisted in its objective of insisting upon a reduction" in the Soviet heavy missiles.

In March 1977, the United States proposed that the present Soviet limit of 308 heavy missiles be cut to 150 and that both sides be limited to 550 land-based ICBMs that carry more than one bomb or warhead—the so-called multiple independently targetable re-entry vehicles, or MIRVs.

The Soviets turned that proposal—which was part of a broader arms control package—down.

In later sessions, according to informed sources, the United States tried to get the Soviets to limit the heavy ICBMs to 190, then 220, then 250 before the Americans finally just gave up on that issue.

Asked by Sen. Gary Hart (D-Colo) what concessions he would be willing to make in return for the Soviets' limiting their heavy missiles, Rowny replied, "None."

He went on to say the treaty is supposed to give both sides equality in strategic weapons, but Soviet possession of the big missiles is "a unilateral right."

When the U.S. advantage in sub-launched warheads was brought up, Rowny declared they were far less effective than the warheads on the SS-18.

Rowny said the military chiefs had pressed to prevent any limitation on cruise missiles since they were primarily a U.S. weapon. But, he added, when it was clear there were to be some limits, the chiefs initially disagreed with the positions eventually taken.

For example, the chiefs opposed a Soviet proposal to count all conventional cruise missiles as if they were nuclear.

They earlier had opposed limited ranges for ground and sub-launched missiles. When some limits were imminent, the chiefs wanted them at 200 kilometers—a range that would affect

hundreds of Soviet weapons, Rowny said.

"This view did not prevail," Rowny told the committee. Instead the limit in the treaty protocol was set at 600 kilometers, a distance that would keep any U.S. system from reaching the Soviet Union from bases in Western Europe.

The protocol will expire in December 1981, before the U.S. land-based cruise missile will be ready for deployment. Nevertheless, the chiefs had opposed the protocol as setting a precedent.

Sen. William Cohen (R-Maine) confirmed through Rowny his concern that there was no firm understanding on what constitutes "national technical means"—the phrase describing intelligence monitoring of the SALT II provisions.

The United States believes use of third countries for intelligence collection is protected by the agreement; the Soviets do not, according to Rowny.